"Travancore has in this Assembly an institution which with judicious development might be made most useful for purposes of good government". Mr. Raghaviah however, wanted to reduce the powers of the Assembly. Fortunately his attempts in that direction ended in a fiasco The present Dewan promised to revise the constitution and powers of the Assembly ; but nothing was done yet.

The following were the suggestions that the member had to make in the matter :—

(1) The Assembly should be given a statutory basis ;

(2) All legislative measures should be placed before the Assembly for general discussion, and the opinions recorded by the Assembly should be communicated to the Legislative Council ;

(3) The Assembly should have the power of discussing the State Budget before it was placed before the Legislative Council ;

(4) The liberty of the members as to the choice of subjects should be unrestricted ;

(5) All measures of new taxation, including raising of existing taxes, should be voted upon by the Assembly ;

(6) The right of moving resolutions on matters of public interest should be granted to the Assembly and resolutions passed by it, should, when approved by the Council, be binding on Government ;

(7) The right of interpellation should be expressly granted to the Assembly ;

(8) The qualifications for the franchise should be lowered ;

(9) Definite rules should be framed as regards nomination of members to the Assembly.

194. Reform of the Legislative Council.

MR. R. RAMAN PILLAI (*Member, Quilon taluk, Group II*) said that the present non-official majority in the Legislative Council was not real but only nominal. Of the twenty-eight elected members, five were elected by special constituencies and only twenty-three by the general constituencies. But the representatives of the special constituencies generally threw in their lot with Government, whenever a question arose as between Government and the non-official side. The general constituencies should therefore be given a majority in the Council.

Secondly, persons having any kind of financial transactions with Government should be disqualified for membership in the Council, for no opposition to Government could be expected of a member who was a printer of Government publications or a contractor under Government.

Thirdly, the Dewan should not be the president of the Council, and the deputy president should be elected by the members.

Fourthly, the power of making rules under the Legislative Council Regulation should be vested in the Legislative Council.

Fifthly, the subjects excluded from the right of interpellation should be reduced, and supplementary questions should be allowed to be asked by all members.

Sixthly, as regards resolutions, there should be a rule compelling Government to place in every meeting a statement of action taken on the resolutions passed and the reasons in cases where no action was taken. The subjects excluded from the scope of resolutions should be reduced.

Seventhly, in regard to the Budget discussion, the sanction of the Council should be necessary not only for expenditure but also for revenue. The distinction between votable and non-votable expenditure should be abolished. No scheme of public utility involving large interests and great initial outlay should be started without the previous sanction of the Council and no alienation of the natural resources of the State should be made without 75 per cent of the members of the Council rising to it.

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Finally, the Council should have the power of altering or modifying the provisions of the Legislative Council Regulation.

195. Responsible government in Travancore.

Mr. A. N. VISWANATHA PILLAI (*Member, Quilon taluk, Group 1*) pointed out the evils of recruiting Dewans from the British service. The officers taken on loan from British India cared only to be in the good books of the British Government. The Interportal Trade Convention, the Periyar water agreement, the Cochin harbour scheme, the Kannan Devan Hills contract all these illustrated the light-heartedness with which foreign Dewans sacrificed the interests of the State in order to gain their own ends.

The member next dealt with the evils of appointing foreigners, especially Europeans who had no acquaintance with the country, as heads of departments. Incidentally he made reference to the Police Department, and said that though Mr. Pitt was a capable officer, the discipline of the department had suffered under his administration. So far as the Education Department was concerned, the Director was a person who had no acquaintance with the vernaculars of the State and hence was not fit to control the vernacular branch of the department.

The member then referred to various topics such as reduction of the pay of high officers, relief of unemployment, development of indigenous industries, reform of the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly etc. The Assembly was to be put on a statutory basis. The duration of the Assembly was to be extended to three years. The Assembly was also to be empowered to ask questions, to move resolutions and to pass the annual Budget.

196. The system of government the country wants.

Mr. JOSEPH MALIAKKAL (*Member, Nominated*) said that there was much confusion of thought in the talk about 'responsible government' in Travancore. The expression was picked up in British India and people sought to apply it in the same sense to Travancore. Those who did so forgot that in British India they had an alien government. What the people there wanted was therefore an indigenous government which would be responsible to them. But conditions in Travancore were entirely different. In Travancore there was an indigenous government conducted by and in the name of a benevolent Ruler. The Maharajas of the State were Rulers by birth and not by election of the people. They were Rulers for life, their tenure could not be determined by the will of the subjects. The term 'responsible government' could not therefore be applied to the Government of Travancore in the sense in which it was used in relation to the British Indian Government.

The question then arose how far the principles of 'responsible government' as understood abroad could be established in Travancore without conflicting with the essentially monarchical nature of the existing government of the State. For this purpose some people would look for guidance farther abroad than British India and go to a country like England. In England, as everybody knew, responsible government existed in the form of a government by Parliament. This was possible there in view of the prevailing system of party government. In Travancore there was no such party system. Such parties as there were followed communal lines. There was one more important fact to be taken note of in the case of Travancore. Though the total strength of the population of the State was about 45 lakhs, the number of persons qualified to vote at the Legislative Council elections counted only $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs. Any government that was responsible to the Legislative Council would hence be responsible only to 3 per cent. of the population. In fact the government itself would be one by a narrow section of the population and not by the whole or even by the smallest majority. The establishment of responsible government in Travancore at the present moment was therefore absolutely impossible.

All that was possible under existing circumstances was for the Ruler and the Minister to ascertain the wishes of the people and satisfy them as far as possible.

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